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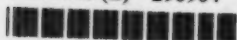
**Assistance in mine action****Report of the Secretary-General***Summary*

The present report is submitted pursuant to General Assembly resolution 58/127 of 19 December 2003 and focuses on progress achieved from mid-August 2003 to mid-August 2004 in implementing the 6 strategic goals and 48 objectives of the revised United Nations mine action strategy for 2001-2005 (A/58/260 and Add.1).

Progress has been made in the following areas:

- (a) Improving the assessment of situations in mine affected countries. Assessment missions were carried out in Liberia, Malawi, Senegal and Uganda;
- (b) Improving capacity to respond to emergencies. The United Nations rapid response plan was tested in Iraq and reviewed through a formal evaluation. A revision is in progress;
- (c) Continuing efforts to build national mine action capacity. New capacity-building programmes were established in Afghanistan, Colombia, Iraq, Jordan and the Sudan. National programmes have benefited from a range of training opportunities and have strengthened field-level planning and coordination;
- (d) Strengthening quality management. International mine action standards for mine risk education were approved and disseminated;
- (e) Mobilizing resources. Increased resources were made available and initiatives were taken to encourage participation in mine action by international financial institutions;
- (f) Improving coordination and implementation of advocacy. A United Nations mine action advocacy strategy was approved.

\* A/59/150.



The present report includes recommendations related to implementation of the United Nations mine action strategy for 2001-2005, activation of the rapid response plan, strengthening of national capacity, encouragement of international financial institutions to support mine action and encouragement of high-level participation in the Nairobi Summit on a Mine Free World.

## Contents

|                                                                                                                    | <i>Paragraphs</i> | <i>Page</i> |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------|-------------|
| I. Introduction .....                                                                                              | 1-2               | 3           |
| II. Progress achieved in the implementation of the revised United Nations mine action strategy for 2001-2005. .... | 3-79              | 3           |
| III. Conclusions and recommendations .....                                                                         | 80-81             | 18          |

## I. Introduction

1. In its resolution 58/127 of 19 December 2003, the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General to submit to it at its fifty-ninth session a report on progress achieved on all relevant issues outlined in his previous reports to the Assembly on assistance in mine clearance and mine action and in the resolution itself, including progress made by the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and international and regional organizations and national programmes and on the operation of the Voluntary Trust Fund for Assistance in Mine Action and other mine action programmes, as well as a report on the implementation of the revised United Nations mine action strategy for 2001-2005.

2. In the same resolution, the General Assembly also requested the Secretary-General to report on the first implementation of the United Nations emergency response plan. The United Nations mine action advocacy strategy, which has been issued as an addendum to the present report (A/59/284/Add.1), was endorsed in November 2003 by the Inter-Agency Coordination Group on Mine Action<sup>1</sup> and fulfils objective 6.7 of the United Nations mine action strategy for 2001-2005 (see A/58/260/Add.1).

## II. Progress achieved in the implementation of the revised United Nations mine action strategy for 2001-2005

3. This section describes progress achieved from mid-August 2003 to mid-August 2004 in the implementation of the strategic goals contained in the revised United Nations mine action strategy for 2001-2005 (A/58/260/Add.1).

### Goal 1

**Information is produced and made available to all to understand and address mine action problems.**

4. Assessment missions provide a basic understanding of the problems posed by landmines and explosive remnants of war<sup>2</sup> in a country or region and inform the development of subsequent interventions. In August 2003, the Mine Action Service, of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) undertook a mission to Malawi and reported that landmines affected the 1,000-kilometre border with Mozambique. In September 2003, before the deployment of the United Nations Mission in Liberia, the Mine Action Service identified no serious threat from landmines stemming from the recent conflict. Unexploded ordnance, however, posed a limited threat. In March 2004, the Mine Action Service and UNDP carried out missions to Senegal and Uganda. In Senegal, the mission confirmed that a substantial area between the Casamance River and the border with Guinea-Bissau was contaminated with landmines, which was hindering development. In Uganda, the mission identified contamination by landmines or unexploded ordnance in the Luwero district north of Kampala, the western Rwenzori Mountains and the country's northern districts.

5. Information is also regularly gathered and recorded by United Nations mine action programmes by means of the Information Management System for Mine Action software (IMSMA). The system, developed by the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining, has been continuously upgraded since its initial

release in 1999. IMSMA is now operational in 36 countries. In the last quarter of 2003 alone, the Centre carried out IMSMA needs assessments or provided technical support or training in 13 countries or territories.

6. The Mine Action Service continued work on the development of the Electronic Mine Information Network (e-Mine), which may be reached through the Internet at [www.mineaction.org](http://www.mineaction.org). The amount and range of content available grew significantly. Among the estimated 800 new documents uploaded were texts of national mine action legislation, United Nations reports and resolutions, international agreements relating to landmines and reports from national mine action programmes. There are about 1,400 separate user sessions daily.

## **Goal 2**

### **Mine action is effectively coordinated and implemented in United Nations-managed programmes and planning processes**

7. The United Nations mine action rapid response plan was developed in 2002 as a mechanism to enable coordinated and rapid deployment of mine action assets to support the delivery of humanitarian relief or peacekeeping operations. The Inter-Agency Coordination Group for Mine Action activated the plan in January 2003 in preparation for a mine action response in Iraq. United Nations officials were deployed to Iraq in April 2003 and established a mine action coordination team in Baghdad and an area mine action coordination team in Basrah to oversee, prioritize and assign tasks. Following the adoption by the Security Council of its resolution 1483 (2003), the two teams also began advising the National Mine Action Authority of Iraq. Activities implemented in the context of the rapid response plan included an emergency survey, mine risk education and mine and unexploded ordnance clearance operations. A total of 2,499 communities were surveyed and 739 dangerous areas were identified. The Mine Action Service contracted the services of a mine and unexploded ordnance clearance company in southern Iraq through the United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS). Since the start of those operations, more than 500,000 items of unexploded or abandoned ordnance have been destroyed. The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) funded non-governmental organizations (NGOs) to take the lead for mine risk education: the Mines Advisory Group in the south and Handicap International around Baghdad.

8. The attack on the United Nations headquarters in Baghdad in August 2003 forced the Organization to evacuate its international staff and to curtail some activities. At a meeting in Amman in October 2003 among representatives of the National Mine Action Authority, United Nations agencies and other stakeholders, it was agreed to conclude the emergency response phase of the operation and to transfer lead responsibility for United Nations mine action assistance in Iraq from the Mine Action Service to UNDP and to assist the National Mine Action Authority in establishing a sustainable national mine action framework. The Mine Action Service has continued to fund the mine clearance contractor operating in southern Iraq, which is working under the coordination of the Authority.

9. In late 2003, the Mine Action Service commissioned an external evaluation of the rapid response plan and its implementation in Iraq. The report, which was discussed at a workshop in Stockholm in May 2004, found that the implementation structure of the plan was sound and made a number of recommendations, particularly regarding the need for better information-sharing, to enhance its future use. The

review identified a need for a detailed planning framework that included threat monitoring, contingency planning and operational planning and for the active involvement of major stakeholders in the planning and implementation of an emergency response. An enhancement of the plan's coordination mechanism is under consideration, and discussions are under way among United Nations mine action partners and NGOs about which operational components (e.g., explosive ordnance disposal) are essential in an emergency response. The review also suggested a need for greater emphasis on mine victim surveillance to assist with prioritization of tasks. The recommendations from the evaluation are guiding the revision of the plan, which is due to be completed by December 2004.

10. The Mine Action Service manages the Mine Action Centre for Afghanistan, which is responsible for planning, coordinating and overseeing the mine action programme, on behalf of the Government of Afghanistan. In 2003, approximately 78 square kilometres of affected area were cleared, with over 22 square kilometres of minefield and 56 square kilometres of former battlefield returned to communities. In addition, more than 160 square kilometres of affected land were surveyed, and mine risk education reached almost 800,000 people. Also in 2003, the Mine Action Centre sought to integrate mine action into the Government's development and reconstruction efforts, with funding from sources such as the Asian Development Bank, the European Commission, Japan, the United States Agency for International Development and the World Bank. Key achievements were the clearing of mines from the Kabul-Kandahar road, which reopened in December, and the start of clearance operations along the Kandahar-Herat road. During the reporting period, Afghanistan received \$32 million for road clearance and reconstruction projects through the UNDP Thematic Trust Fund for Crisis Prevention and Recovery. It also received more than \$30 million through the Voluntary Trust Fund for Assistance in Mine Action to support the activities of the 15 national and international implementing NGOs working in the country. In 2003, the Government established a Mine Action Consultative Group, which includes representatives of the Government, the United Nations, donors and national and international organizations. The group aids in planning, policy development and resource mobilization. The Mine Action Service and UNDP are working with the Government to develop a plan under which it will take over full responsibility for the programme. In Afghanistan, as in other countries where the Mine Action Service operates, the programme is implemented with the support of UNOPS.

11. The Mine Action Service participated in a Department of Peacekeeping Operations assessment mission to Burundi in February 2004 and recommended that a mine action programme be developed as part of the United Nations Operation in Burundi. In his report to the Security Council in March 2004 (S/2004/210), the Secretary-General stated that mine and unexploded ordnance contamination would initially pose only a limited threat to the deployment of the proposed mission, but noted that as peacekeeping personnel extended their presence throughout the country, the risk of entering hazardous areas might increase. Consequently, the Security Council, in its resolution 1545 (2004), approved the inclusion of a mine action coordination centre within the mission. The Mine Action Service established the mine action programme in Burundi in June 2004 and immediately began to address the operational needs of the peacekeeping mission and the need for mine action in support of humanitarian relief.

12. The Mine Action Coordination Centre in Kinshasa continued to provide expertise to the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of

the Congo, the humanitarian community and national authorities and agencies. The Centre coordinated emergency surveys to be used in the development of a national mine action plan, the emergency clearance of mines and unexploded ordnance and the destruction of stockpiles, and assisted UNICEF and other organizations in a risk prevention campaign. The Centre also undertook advocacy initiatives and assisted national authorities with mine-related legislation. Technical surveys were completed and mines and unexploded ordnance were cleared from the Bunia, Kindu and Manono airfields. Surveys revealed information that reduced the length of road to be cleared from 64.4 kilometres to 16 kilometres in the Bunia-Komanda sector, facilitating the deployment of the Mission in the Ituri District.

13. The Mine Action Coordination Centre and the Peacekeeping Force Mine Action Centre in the Temporary Security Zone between Ethiopia and Eritrea were combined in 2003 and became responsible for prioritizing and assigning tasks on behalf of the United Nations Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea. The new Centre has coordination and operational functions in mine risk education, explosive ordnance disposal, medical services, clearance operations, marking and mapping and emergency response. Through the deployment of the peacekeeping force's demining assets, more than 12 million square metres of land were cleared. This is the first time that peacekeeping force and humanitarian mine action assets have been fully integrated under a single coordination mechanism. The Centre also provided support to the UNDP mine action capacity-building programme, which has assumed responsibility for United Nations-managed mine action capacity-building in the country. UNDP technical staff support the reconstituted Eritrean Demining Authority and Eritrean Demining Operations office. With assistance from UNDP, programmatic linkages have been made among the Eritrean landmine impact survey, the Information Management System for Mine Action and the national survey for people with disabilities.

14. Recent developments in the National Demining Office of Lebanon include the completion of a national strategic plan and a landmine impact survey. In 2002, the Mine Action Service collaborated with the Government of the United Arab Emirates and the National Demining Office to establish Operation Emirates Solidarity, a unique partnership to clear landmines in southern Lebanon and encourage the return of displaced communities. The Mine Action Coordination Centre in southern Lebanon provides accreditation, task allocation, quality management oversight and community liaison support to contracted companies, as well as training to staff of the National Demining Office. The third phase of the operation was completed on 29 May 2004. A total of 58,114 landmines and 4,376 items of unexploded ordnance were destroyed, and 4.9 square kilometres of land were released back to local communities. The Centre continued to integrate its activities into the plans and operations of the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon. UNDP is supporting capacity-building in the National Demining Office.

15. The Mine Action Service continued to implement the emergency mine action programme in the Sudan, established under a tripartite memorandum of understanding signed by the United Nations, the Government of the Sudan and the Sudan People's Liberation Movement. The National Mine Action Office and two regional offices, in Kadugli and Rumbek, continued to ensure that mine action was coordinated, planned and carried out in accordance with the principles of impartiality and neutrality and with the prior agreement of the Government of the Sudan and the Sudan People's Liberation Movement. Activities have been successfully implemented in the Nuba Mountains, with teams from both sides undergoing joint training and deployment. The

Mine Action Service, through UNOPS, has contracted NGO survey teams and a commercial organization to clear major supply routes in the south, which are critical for the delivery of humanitarian aid, the return of refugees and internally displaced persons and the future deployment of a peace support operation. The World Food Programme (WFP) also deployed survey teams to assist with this and other emergency clearance activities in the south. Other activities included training of Sudanese Red Crescent Society volunteers to carry out surveys of victims; Danish Church Aid volunteers to carry out a needs-assessment survey; and NGO and Sudanese Government personnel and volunteers in mine risk education. UNICEF recruited mine risk education coordinators to work in the National Mine Action Office in Khartoum and southern Sudan. UNDP deployed a senior technical adviser to support the programme with institutional and capacity development and to assist the national authority with long-term planning, management and execution of mine action.

16. The Mine Action Service is responsible for the overall coordination of United Nations mine action, which is undertaken by 13 departments, programmes, funds and agencies. The Service convened monthly meetings of the Inter-Agency Coordination Group on Mine Action at the working level to discuss emerging policy and operational issues, including United Nations input for the Nairobi Summit on a Mine Free World, scheduled to begin in November 2004, mine action in Burundi and the Sudan and the rapid response plan. The group also met twice at the principals' level and endorsed the revised United Nations mine action strategy for 2001-2005 as well as the mine action advocacy strategy. In mid-2004, United Nations mine action partners initiated a review of the 1998 United Nations mine action policy, to reflect recent developments in the field of mine action.

17. The Steering Committee on Mine Action brings together members of the Inter-Agency Coordination Group on Mine Action and representatives of the International Campaign to Ban Landmines, the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining, ICRC and other NGOs to review operational activities and policy issues. In 2003 and 2004, the committee addressed mine action priorities in the Sudan, the United Nations mine action advocacy strategy and progress achieved towards creating a convention on the rights of persons with disabilities. In March 2004, representatives of the Mine Action Service, UNDP and UNICEF met with representatives of six international NGOs in Oslo to examine ways of strengthening collaboration between the United Nations and NGOs in the field. Examples of good practice to improve operations at the headquarters and field levels were identified and included in the conclusions of the meeting.

18. As the number of actors involved in mine action grows, additional attention is focused on the coordination and integration of mine action into humanitarian, peacekeeping and development planning and operations.

19. United Nations mine action partners actively promoted the integration of mine action requirements into country-specific peacekeeping and humanitarian response plans. As described above, mine action operations were integrated into peacekeeping plans in Burundi, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Ethiopia and Eritrea and southern Lebanon.

20. As the lead agency for mine risk education, UNICEF has included initiatives in its humanitarian response plans in 35 countries. It has deployed technical consultants, or "flying teams", to many of those locations to identify at-risk groups and to develop and implement mine accident prevention strategies for emergency

situations. UNICEF support helped to build mine risk education capacity in the eastern part of Chad in April and May 2004, serving 100,000 people, including Sudanese refugees.

21. Fundamental to the UNICEF core commitments to children in emergencies, adopted in January 2004, is the commitment to conduct a rapid situation assessment and analysis of violations of children's rights and child-protection needs, including the risk of mines and explosive remnants of war, which will inform programmatic responses.

22. In August 2003, as part of the preparation for the transitional consolidated appeal for Angola, the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs and UNDP supported the Government in developing transition plans that incorporated mine action into the provincial plans and budgets for the rehabilitation of roads, bridge repairs, delivery of humanitarian assistance and delivery of social services in returnee communities. The Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs co-chaired a Mine Action Working Group, attended by key United Nations agencies, to coordinate mine action efforts and bolstered mechanical demining capacity through an emergency response fund. With support from UNDP, the lead United Nations mine action agency in the country, Angolan authorities established the National Inter-Sectoral Commission for Demining and Humanitarian Assistance and are strengthening the National Demining Institute and provincial-level coordination mechanisms.

23. The Mine Action Service and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) organized a workshop in May 2004 that resulted in a series of recommendations aimed at enhancing cooperation, clarifying roles and designing more predictable and structured collaboration. Particular emphasis will be given to linking the early warning, contingency planning, preparedness and response frameworks of the Mine Action Service and UNHCR.

24. The timely delivery of mine risk education and the surveying and marking of mined areas are critical to the safe return of refugees and displaced populations. Whenever possible, UNHCR works on mine-related issues with United Nations agencies and country teams, as well as with national authorities, civil society and refugees and internally displaced persons. UNHCR, in consultation with UNICEF and the Mine Action Service, planned mine risk education for Sudanese refugees in Chad, Ethiopia, Kenya and Uganda. UNHCR and the Service may also undertake joint assessment missions to Burundi and the United Republic of Tanzania to determine mine action requirements for the repatriation of refugees to Burundi. UNICEF will provide input on mine risk education. UNHCR also continues to be involved in mine action in Sri Lanka, where it chairs the Internally Displaced Persons Working Group.

25. The policy of WFP on mine action was enacted in April 2004. Its operational framework on mine action provided guidance for incorporating mine action into the organization's planning at the regional and country levels. Globally, the Programme's involvement in mine action includes technical advice, awareness training, assessment of mined areas, opening of supply routes and storage facilities, clearance, resource mobilization, stockpile destruction and advocacy.

26. Mine action programme managers are routinely included as members of the United Nations country and security management teams. To facilitate this, the Mine

Action Service enters into an exchange of letters with the Special Representative of the Secretary-General or the resident/humanitarian coordinator who is assigned responsibility for overseeing mine action in a country. The formalization of this relationship has enhanced programme managers' access to critical decision-making processes. In addition, resident coordinators or representatives coordinate activities with high-level government officials in UNDP-supported programmes.

27. Mine action can be a confidence-building tool in negotiating peace. Clearance activities eliminate the debris of war and mine risk education reduces risk to civilians and is a tangible indication of the restoration of trust among warring parties. It is often one of the first issues upon which disputing parties can agree and one of the first service areas to reach vulnerable groups. In the Sudan, mine action was among the first areas of agreement between the Government and the Sudan People's Liberation Movement. In Bosnia and Herzegovina, mine action was the first activity to be administered by a "joint State commission", which is now operating as a single national centre. In Afghanistan, mine action teams consisting of members of formerly opposing parties to the conflict were among the first groups to work "a cross lines". Mine action was explicitly included in peace negotiations that preceded the establishment of the United Nations Operation in Burundi.

28. Specific criteria and benchmarks for the transition of responsibility from the United Nations to national authorities are being developed by members of the Inter-Agency Coordination Group in Mine Action. Lessons learned from previous transitions are being studied and will contribute to guidelines that may be tailored to each country's unique circumstances. This process will be completed in late 2004. The Mine Action Service and UNDP are laying the groundwork for transition to national authorities in Afghanistan and the Sudan.

29. The Mine Action Service continued to manage the landmine and unexploded ordnance safety project, which targets institutions working in hazardous settings to minimize mine-related accidents. In 2003, the Service convened eight train-the-trainer workshops for 150 participants working in 60 different organizations from 12 countries/territories, exceeding the original target of 10 countries. The workshops were conducted by Handicap International France.

30. Through its presence in some 80 countries, ICRC focuses its mine action efforts on victim assistance, advocacy and programmes, including mine risk education and data gathering. There are programmes in 27 countries. ICRC engages in humanitarian diplomacy with national and regional authorities to encourage States to adhere to and implement the Anti-personnel Mine Ban Treaty. It also assists States in the development of national implementing legislation and raises awareness about mine ban norms in disseminating humanitarian law to armed forces and armed groups.

### **Goal 3**

#### **National and local authorities effectively plan, coordinate and implement mine action programmes**

31. The primary responsibility for managing mine action programmes lies with national and local authorities. UNDP and UNICEF provide support to national authorities, when requested, to establish institutional structures to address the mine threat over the long term with maximum efficiency.

32. UNDP continued to coordinate its mine action response in post-conflict environments through the mine action team of its Bureau for Crisis Prevention and Recovery. UNDP provides technical and operational support to 24 national programmes. In post-conflict environments, long-term mine action planning and national capacity-building must begin as early as possible. In countries with peacekeeping operations, such as Afghanistan, Eritrea and Lebanon, UNDP is developing national capacity to ensure transfer to national management. Other highlights of UNDP assistance in the reporting period are summarized below. In Azerbaijan, a landmine impact survey was completed and UNDP technical support is now minimal, provided primarily in strategic areas. In Albania, UNDP is helping the Government to realize its goal of declaring the country free from the impact of mines by the end of 2005 and in Bosnia and Herzegovina, a new national structure is effectively managing mine action. UNDP continues to provide advisory services focused on long-term strategic issues. In Cambodia, UNDP is assisting national authorities with an institutional framework for integrating demining into socio-economic development. In Chad, UNDP supports government efforts to demine a contaminated area in Wadi Doun, allowing hundreds of people to return home. UNDP supported government efforts to develop a mine action strategy in the Islamic Republic of Iran and helped to establish a mine action capacity-building programme in Jordan, to develop a 10-year strategic plan for mine clearance, mine risk education and victim assistance in the Lao People's Democratic Republic and to establish national mine action standards in Sri Lanka. In Tajikistan, UNDP implemented a quick, efficient response to the needs of the Government to address a relatively limited mine problem.

33. Landmine impact surveys have been completed in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Cambodia, Chad, Lebanon, Mozambique, portions of Somalia, Thailand and Yemen. Surveys are set to conclude in Eritrea and Ethiopia, and are under way or set to begin in Afghanistan, Angola, additional portions of Somalia, the Sudan and Viet Nam. The Mine Action Service provides, through UNOPS, quality-assurance monitors, and UNDP helps national authorities to develop plans based on information from the surveys. The Mine Action Service also supported an external evaluation of the global landmine survey initiative, the results of which were delivered in early 2004. The recommendations from the evaluation are being implemented. The Governments of Afghanistan, Azerbaijan, Eritrea, Ethiopia and Somalia, with assistance from UNDP, commissioned landmine impact surveys through the Survey Action Centre.

34. UNDP worked with United Nations partners and national authorities to establish strategic mine action plans covering coordination and implementation of mine clearance and marking, mine risk education, survivor assistance, policy-making, resource mobilization and advocacy. These strategic plans also define the level of United Nations support to be provided throughout each phase of a programme, describe the division of labour and establish frameworks for the devolution of responsibility to Governments at the earliest possible stage. Strategic plans were finalized in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Cambodia, Mozambique and Yemen, and are being developed in Afghanistan, Iraq and the Sudan.

35. UNDP, with support from the Mine Action Service and UNICEF, is working to mainstream mine action into the development plans of mine-affected developing nations. UNDP is also promoting partnerships among the mine action and development communities. Organizations involved in mine action at the local level

are being encouraged to contribute to this objective by planning and implementing mine action in coordination with development projects and programmes whenever possible.

36. UNDP and the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining initiated regional training workshops in Amman and Sarajevo for mine action managers from 12 countries on incorporating socio-economic data into mine action analysis and planning.

37. UNDP offered management and technical training to more than 400 senior and mid-level national managers from more than 20 countries in strategic planning, logistics, change management, human resources management and leadership, as well as procurement, mine action standards and technology and techniques.

38. Through its mine action exchange programme, UNDP enabled managers and staff of mine action programmes to undertake short assignments with programmes in other countries or with international organizations. During the reporting period, eight mine-affected countries participated, and exchanges focused on how to develop effective national institutions and technical capacity, particularly in the areas of mechanical demining and mine detection dogs.

39. UNICEF coordinated and implemented its mine action strategy and provided policy advice and programme guidance through its landmines and small arms team within the Office of Emergency Programmes.

40. UNICEF continued to implement and support mine risk education and mine accident prevention programmes and to provide advocacy and survivor assistance in 35 countries and territories. UNICEF assigned mine risk education officers to work in mine action centres in, for example, Afghanistan, Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Sudan. UNICEF is the only United Nations mine action entity working in Georgia, Guatemala, Mauritania, Nicaragua, the occupied Palestinian territories, Panama, the Russian Federation (Chechnya), the Syrian Arab Republic (the Golan Heights) and Viet Nam.

41. UNICEF, in collaboration with the United States Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), conducted training in field epidemiology for mine action to enable mine action programme specialists to better undertake surveys and data analysis for mine action planning, monitoring and evaluation. Thirty-two participants — representing NGOs, Governments, the United Nations and international organizations — took part. The training will be conducted annually. UNICEF, with CDC, the World Health Organization, Physicians for Human Rights and International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War, co-hosted an international conference on the role of public health in dealing with war-related injuries.

42. UNICEF began assisting Afghanistan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Cambodia, Colombia, Iraq and Sri Lanka to create national mine risk education standards. It also continued to support the development of a national mine risk education strategy in Colombia. In Bosnia and Herzegovina, UNICEF arranged training for national mine risk education managers in techniques to promote mine risk reduction at the community level and to implement programmes that were in line with national and international standards. UNICEF also trained schoolteachers in mine risk education and taught them how to integrate mine risk education into curricula.

43. In Colombia, UNICEF trained national staff in data collection and local facilitators in mine risk reduction teaching methodologies. In Ethiopia, UNICEF taught government staff to train providers of mine risk educational services and trained national staff to better plan, manage, monitor and evaluate their projects. UNICEF collaborated with UNDP in training local officials in victim surveillance methodologies and recording victim data with the Information Management System for Mine Action. In eight countries, UNICEF trained primary school teachers how to educate students about mines and unexploded ordnance.

44. UNICEF organized a mine risk education working group to raise public awareness about the threat of landmines and improvised explosive devices in Nepal, contributed to the development of a national risk reduction strategy in Burundi by undertaking a national survey of casualties and, together with the national demining office in Chad, elaborated strategies for undertaking mine risk education for refugees on the border with the Sudan.

45. In 2003, the Mine Action Service began advising mine action centres on the implementation of United Nations policy on victim assistance. In Eritrea, the Mine Action Service reviewed victim data and proposed a system for sharing the information with the Eritrean Demining Authority and the office of Eritrean Demining Operations to better equip them in setting priorities for clearance and marking. In the Sudan, the Service provided advice on building capacity for addressing victim assistance issues, resulting in a new victim assistance work plan for 2003-2004 and the start of the collection of data on victims.

#### **Goal 4**

##### **Mine action operations are implemented to the highest attainable standard**

46. Each international mine action standard is reviewed at least once every three years. During the reporting period, the Mine Action Service and the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining drafted new standards on issuing contracts, with support from UNOPS, and on mechanical mine clearance. Both organizations were involved in the production of a European Committee for Standardization workshop agreement on the testing of metal detectors. A similar workshop agreement on the testing of mechanical devices went into effect in April 2004. A review of the international standards on the use of mine detection dogs is in progress.

47. The Mine Action Service chaired the International Mine Action Standards Review Board, whose members included representatives of mine affected States, donors, NGOs, commercial operators, United Nations organizations and individual experts. The Board is responsible for recommending new or updated standards. In April 2004, the Inter-Agency Coordination Group in Mine Action approved new standards for mine risk education and disseminated them to all programmes. UNICEF is collaborating with the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining to develop guidelines for the implementation of those standards. At the same time, UNDP is helping its programme countries to develop national standards that are compatible with the international standards.

48. The United Nations arranges evaluations of its operations to ensure that programmes are efficient and effective. The evaluation of the deployment in Iraq under the rapid response plan is reported in paragraph 9 above. The external evaluation of the United Nations Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea began in August

2004. Systematic evaluation methodologies have been developed by UNICEF through the development of international standards for monitoring and evaluating mine risk education. During the reporting period, UNDP commissioned independent evaluations of its programmes in Angola, Azerbaijan and Bosnia and Herzegovina.

49. Mine action partners seek to keep abreast of developments in mine action technologies and techniques. In Afghanistan, for example, a contract was issued by UNOPS for a project that introduced the Mechem Explosive and Drug Detection System, which facilitated the speedy verification of the reconstruction of the Kabul-Kandahar road. In Eritrea, a contract issued by UNOPS on behalf of the Mine Action Service introduced the use of the towed metal detector array system, ensuring safe passage of the roads in the Temporary Security Zone. The technology coordinator of the Mine Action Service facilitated information exchanges among field operations, Governments and research and development establishments.

50. Information about best practices in mine action contributes to the quality of future interventions. In late 2003, the Mine Action Service and the Mine Action Information Centre at James Madison University (United States of America), called upon mine action practitioners to contribute lessons learned to an existing database. The two organizations received about 200 new lessons, which were reviewed by a team representing a cross-section of the mine action community for possible inclusion in the International Mine Action Standards or as technical notes. Meanwhile, the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining collected more information for its database of demining accidents.

51. The quality of mine action programmes also depends in part on the extent to which gender concerns are taken into account in planning and operations. On behalf of the Inter-Agency Coordination Group in Mine Action, the Mine Action Service contracted a gender consultant, who produced draft guidelines for integrating gender considerations into mine action. The guidelines will be finalized by the end of 2004.

52. UNICEF initiated a gender analysis of mine risk education projects and programmes. The findings led to the integration of gender perspectives into the international standards on mine risk education.

53. The Department for Disarmament Affairs continually promoted the links between gender and mine action issues. Its staff addressed conferences, workshops and panels, including a workshop in Berlin in January 2004 on gender perspectives on small arms, a panel discussion on gender perspectives on disarmament, demobilization and reintegration sponsored by the United Nations Development Fund for Women and a seminar in Vilnius on the Anti-personnel Mine Ban Treaty in Northern and Eastern Europe.

## **Goal 5**

### **Adequate resources for mine action are mobilized and their use is effectively coordinated**

54. Several funding modalities exist for United Nations mine action. The Voluntary Trust Fund for Assistance in Mine Action was established in 1994 and is used primarily to finance assessment missions, mine action programmes managed by the Mine Action Service, the bridging of funding gaps in ongoing programmes and the Service's coordination and advocacy work. Contributions to the Trust Fund totalled \$56.8 million in 2003. The 10 largest donors to the Trust Fund were the

United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, Canada, Japan, Germany, the United States of America, Italy, Denmark, Australia, Finland and Sweden.

55. During the reporting period, UNDP raised more than \$70 million for mine action, including more than \$30 million through the Thematic Trust Fund for Crisis Prevention and Recovery. UNDP mine action programmes also received in kind contributions of equipment and services. In addition, UNDP advised national mine action authorities on establishing or strengthening relationships with donors.

56. The Adopt a Minefield campaign of the United Nations Association of the United States helped increase civil society's involvement in the campaign to rid the world of landmines. By the end of 2003, Adopt a Minefield had raised more than \$10 million for mine action in six countries. Those funds were supplemented by contributions from the Better World Fund and the United States. Throughout the reporting period, UNDP continued to manage Adopt a Minefield activities, with UNOPS providing administrative support in the field.

57. The Mine Action Service, UNDP and UNICEF continued to provide support to the Mine Action Support Group, comprising representatives of 24 mine action donor countries. The Group meets monthly in New York. Germany chaired the Group through December 2003, and Switzerland has led the Group since January 2004. Meetings offer donors an opportunity to share information about trends and developments in mine action and to learn about the mine action policies and operations of United Nations mine action partners. The main themes discussed in 2004 are the integration of mine action into peace processes, the mainstreaming of mine action into development and humanitarian planning and programmes, funding needs and priorities in mine action and the evaluation of mine action programmes. In May 2004, eight members of the Group travelled to Angola to examine the status of mine action and to determine how donor funds can have the greatest impact on affected communities and national infrastructure.

58. The Mine Action Service, the Department for Disarmament Affairs, UNDP and UNICEF participated in meetings of the Resource Mobilization Contact Group in the margins of the intersessional meetings of the States parties to the Anti-personnel Mine Ban Treaty in Geneva, and in Bangkok during the fifth meeting of States parties. The Contact Group placed particular emphasis on encouraging international financial institutions to take part in funding mine action. In July 2004, the Mine Action Service, UNDP and UNICEF joined a delegation of States parties to the Anti-personnel Mine Ban Treaty that met with the World Bank in Washington, D.C. There was agreement with the World Bank that mine action could help advance the Millennium Development Goals and a commitment was made to explore opportunities for closer collaboration in mine affected countries. The World Bank will consider requests for financial support for mine action from affected States and is open to a greater operational role when it has a comparative advantage.

59. Countries that established effective donor coordination mechanisms included Angola, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Cambodia, Lebanon, Mozambique, Tajikistan and Yemen. UNDP created regional advisory positions in Africa and Asia and plans to establish another for the Middle East. Regional advisers will mobilize resources, assist country offices to identify needs in the region, formulate plans and programmes, ensure that immediate mine action needs are met and that longer-term needs are addressed in the policies and programmes of the host country and provide

technical and managerial support to national authorities so that all work conforms to international standards.

60. As part of the consolidated appeals process, the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs oversaw the development of common humanitarian action plans. Since 2003, the Office and United Nations mine action partners have been working together in Angola, Burundi, Chad, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Eritrea, Iraq, the Russian Federation (Chechnya and neighbouring republics), Somalia, the Sudan, Tajikistan and the occupied Palestinian territories to ensure that mine action projects listed in the consolidated appeals process are the same as those presented in the annual portfolio of mine action projects and are elaborated in collaboration with all humanitarian actors on the ground. Between the launch of the 2004 consolidated appeals process in November 2003 and the mid-year review in June 2004, \$12,708,227 was raised for mine action projects in various consolidated appeals, out of total revised requirement of \$40,256,182.

61. The mine action investments database was transferred from the Government of Canada in early 2004 and is now managed by the Mine Action Service; it can be accessed through e-Mine (see para. 6 above). The Service has encouraged all donors to use this resource and is making arrangements to facilitate the provision of data.

62. In December 2003, the United Nations published the portfolio of mine action projects for 2004, featuring more than 300 project proposals from a broad range of actors, including civil society, NGOs and United Nations agencies, departments and funds, as well as analyses of the landmine situation in 36 countries. The value of the projects in the portfolio totalled \$280 million — up from the previous year's \$200 million. The portfolio reflected an effort to strengthen coordination among national and international partners. The result is a comprehensive package of projects that donors may use to identify actions to support.

63. The Mine Action Service organized the seventh annual International Meeting of Mine Action Programme Directors and United Nations Advisers (Geneva, 15-18 March 2004). The event, organized in partnership with UNDP, UNICEF and UNOPS and hosted by the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining, drew 26 senior United Nations programme advisers, 15 national programme directors and 19 other high-ranking national staff from 29 programmes managed and supported by the United Nations. The meeting provided a forum for exchanging views and learning about new policies, trends in mine action, technologies and mine-clearance methods. Topics included the use of impact assessments for national planning, methods to measure the impact of mine action interventions and the relationship between mine action and peace-building.

#### **Goal 6**

**Universal adherence to and compliance with all international instruments and/or commitments that address landmine and/or unexploded ordnance problems and/or that advance the rights of affected persons**

64. United Nations mine action partners participated in the Anti-personnel Mine Ban Treaty's Fifth Meeting of States Parties (Bangkok, 15-19 September 2003), during which representatives of 118 countries and more than 200 NGOs reviewed progress and made plans for the Nairobi Summit on a Mine Free World, to be held from 29 November to 3 December 2004. Goals for the Nairobi Summit include a review of progress achieved in implementing the treaty and the adoption of an

action plan to fulfil the treaty's aims. The United Nations assisted a number of countries in the preparation of their national plans and developed a guide for countries to use in this process. The United Nations continues to promote universal participation in the treaty. The Mine Action Service organized a panel discussion in New York on 15 July 2004 to inform United Nations staff, diplomatic representatives and the media about the aims of the Nairobi Summit. In June 2004, the Administrator of UNDP sent a letter to resident representatives and coordinators highlighting the relevance of mine action from a humanitarian and development perspective. The letter urged host countries to participate in the Nairobi Summit at the highest possible level and to champion the cause of mine action in the lead-up to the event.

65. The Department for Disarmament Affairs, through its Under-Secretary-General and other senior officials, continued to promote and support adherence to, implementation of and full compliance with international instruments and commitments on landmines and related issues.

66. The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights helped to ensure that the United Nations charter bodies, notably the Commission on Human Rights, were engaged in advocating for mine action and for compliance with relevant international instruments. At its sixtieth session (15 March-23 April 2004), the Commission adopted a resolution on the rights of the child (resolution 2004/48) in which it called upon all States and United Nations bodies to continue to support national and international mine action efforts, including through financial contributions, the provision of assistance to victims and social and economic reintegration, mine awareness programmes, mine clearance and child-centred rehabilitation.

67. The Convention on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Certain Conventional Weapons Which May Be Deemed to Be Excessively Injurious or to Have Indiscriminate Effects regulates the use of weapons such as landmines, booby traps and similar devices in conflict. Protocol II on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Mines, Booby Traps and Other Devices and the recently adopted Protocol V on Explosive Remnants of War are relevant to mine action. In 2003, United Nations mine action partners intensified their involvement in discussions related to the drafting of Protocol V, which addresses all parties to conflict and assigns responsibilities for the clearance, removal or destruction of explosive remnants of war. It includes requirements for recording, retaining and transmitting information and precautions for the protection of civilians and humanitarian missions from the effects of explosive remnants of war.

68. United Nations agencies proposed new language for the draft protocol. Many of the proposed changes, communicated in a note dated 17 November 2003 from the Inter-Agency Coordination Group on Mine Action, were incorporated into the final text. The Group emphasized that a strong protocol would enable agencies to begin their work earlier, armed with crucial information, and thus prevent more injuries to innocent civilians and improve protection for United Nations and other humanitarian personnel.

69. When it enters into force, Protocol V will form an important framework for post-conflict mine action. It assigns a role to the United Nations in facilitating assistance to countries for the marking, clearance, removal or destruction of explosive remnants of war and for providing for the care, rehabilitation and social and economic reintegration of victims.

70. On 27 November 2003, the Inter-Agency Standing Committee presented a statement to the meeting of States parties to the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons in which it called for a freeze on the use of cluster munitions and advocated that parties to conflict be held accountable for the use, clean-up and long-term effects of the weapons they employ.

71. The Group of Governmental Experts on the Convention was also mandated to consider proposals for addressing mines other than anti-personnel mines. In March and November 2003 respectively, the Mine Action Service presented case studies on Afghanistan and Angola to illustrate the impact of anti-vehicle mines on humanitarian and development assistance and on clearance operations.

72. In March 2004, the Mine Action Service presented to the Group of Governmental Experts an overview of current and future technology for the detection and clearance of anti-vehicle mines in which it concluded that research and development could not yet fulfil all the requirements of the demining community and recommended collective action. The Service presented a statement expressing the common position of the Inter-Agency Coordination Group on Mine Action, urging the Group of Governmental Experts to agree during 2004 to negotiate a mandate on anti-vehicle mines that might result in an international instrument containing at least the following elements: all anti-vehicle mines should contain a self-destruct mechanism, or at least mechanisms for self-neutralization or self-deactivation, so that they would have a limited lifespan; they should be detectable by commonly available mine-detection equipment; and they should not be fitted with anti-handling devices or sensitive fuses that could be activated by the presence, proximity or contact of a person.

73. At its sixtieth session, the Commission on Human Rights expressed concern at the extent of disabilities caused by the indiscriminate use of anti-personnel mines and other weapons (resolution 2004/52). It strongly condemned mine-laying and other hostile acts carried out against United Nations and associated personnel, as well as personnel of international humanitarian organizations (resolution 2004/77).

74. The Representative of the Secretary-General for Internally Displaced Persons addressed the issue of mines during his missions and in his reporting. In February 2004 he reported that during an August 2003 meeting in Khartoum, the Government of the Sudan recognized the vulnerability of internally displaced persons, particularly children, to the effects of armed conflicts, including unexploded ordnance and landmines (E/CN.4/2004/77/Add.4).

75. The High Commissioner for Human Rights raised the issue of unexploded ordnance and landmines in his report dated 7 May 2004 to the Commission on Human Rights on the situation of human rights in the Darfur region of the Sudan (E/CN.4/2005/3).

76. Several United Nations treaty bodies, particularly the Committee on the Rights of the Child and the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, took note of the impact of mines on children and minority populations. The Committee on the Rights of the Child urged the Government of Eritrea to seek international support for mine clearance and survivor reintegration (CRC/C/41/Add.12) and recommended that the Government of Sri Lanka develop psychosocial support for child mine survivors (CRC/C/70/Add.17).

77. The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights joined United Nations mine action agencies in participating in meetings of the Ad Hoc Committee on a Comprehensive and Integral International Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Rights and Dignity of Persons with Disabilities, as well as meetings of the Working Group established by the ad hoc committee to prepare the initial draft text of the convention. Landmine Survivors Network and Rehabilitation International collaborated with the Mine Action Service to organize a panel on the right to rehabilitation during the third meeting of the ad hoc committee, in May 2004.

78. United Nations mine action staff in Colombia, Somalia, Sri Lanka, the Sudan and elsewhere worked closely with Geneva Call in support of efforts to elicit commitments from non-State actors to refrain from the use of landmines. United Nations colleagues also assisted in the monitoring of compliance with such commitments.

79. In 2003, the Mine Action Service led a consultative process among members of the Inter-Agency Coordination Group on Mine Action resulting in the endorsement in April 2004 of the United Nations advocacy strategy. The strategy (A/59/284/Add.1) aims to inform or influence States, the United Nations system, mine action donors, the general public, non-State actors, NGOs and national and regional mine action organizations. A subgroup of the Coordination Group has developed an implementation plan that draws on the comparative strengths of all relevant United Nations system partners.

### **III. Conclusions and recommendations**

80. The following conclusions may be drawn from the developments reported above:

(a) The revised United Nations mine action strategy for 2001-2005 provides valuable direction and guidance for United Nations entities involved in its implementation and fosters coordination and accountability across the mine action community. The strategy review process revealed considerable consensus among United Nations partners on fundamental principles, including commitments to integrate a development perspective into mine action planning, to emphasize the role of mine affected communities when determining mine action priorities and to address gender concerns in the design, implementation and evaluation of mine action programmes;

(b) United Nations mine action agency efforts to raise the visibility of mine-related issues throughout the United Nations has resulted in the increasingly systematic integration of mine action into planning and operations in the areas of peacekeeping, humanitarian affairs and development at the national and international levels. When the United Nations mine action policy is revised in late 2004, it will further enhance coordination and ensure more timely and effective United Nations mine action;

(c) United Nations efforts have strengthened the capacities of mine affected States to effectively manage all aspects of mine action policy planning, coordination and operations, and have encouraged strengthened cooperation among mine affected States;

(d) The Nairobi Summit on a Mine Free World can help to maintain and build momentum in the mine ban movement, generate public interest and pressure to resolve the problem and produce realistic goals with clear priorities and reasonable time frames for eliminating the threat from high-impact areas over the next five years. The submission of five-year national plans by mine affected States will quantify the problem and define the required response;

(e) Although donors continue to fund mine action primarily through humanitarian or emergency budget lines, there is increasing recognition of the importance of supporting mine action from development and reconstruction budgets as well. Several bilateral and multilateral donors have already provided funding from development budgets for mine action components of reconstruction programmes;

(f) The rapid response plan facilitates the coordinated and rapid deployment of mine action assets to support the delivery of humanitarian relief or peacekeeping operations. The preliminary findings of the evaluation of the plan highlighted the importance of fully integrating mine action concerns into the planning processes for United Nations missions and deployments;

(g) The collaborative approach undertaken in the preparation of the portfolio of mine action projects for 2004 has paved the way for a more comprehensive document in 2005.

81. The following recommendations are derived from the foregoing conclusions:

(a) Member States should continue to support the implementation of the United Nations mine action strategy for 2001-2005. Member States should consider requesting the United Nations to present a new strategy for the period 2006-2010;

(b) The rapid response plan should be further integrated into planning processes for United Nations humanitarian and peacekeeping operations and should be activated in emergency situations when political developments allow it and when no other national capacity exists to address the landmine problem;

(c) Member States should continue to support the strengthening of national capacities to address the problem posed by landmines and explosive remnants of war. Mine affected Member States should include mine action in poverty reduction strategy papers and national development plans;

(d) International financial institutions should assist mine affected developing States to meet targets and treaty obligations and to advance the Millennium Development Goals;

(e) Donor countries contributing funds to mine action should refer to the portfolio of mine action projects. All mine action donors should provide data to the donor investments database;

(f) Member States should be represented at the Nairobi Summit on a Mine Free World at the highest possible level. Mine-affected States should submit comprehensive national plans for consideration at the Summit.

## Notes

<sup>1</sup> The members of the Inter-Agency Coordination Group on Mine Action are representatives of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, the Department for Disarmament Affairs, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, the Office of the Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women, the United Nations Development Programme, the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, the United Nations Children's Fund, the United Nations Office for Project Services, the World Food Programme, the World Health Organization and the World Bank. The International Committee of the Red Cross participates as an observer.

<sup>2</sup> Explosive remnants of war are defined as unexploded ordnance and abandoned explosive ordnance.